



Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests

MO--Victims hit with “unprecedented” court order

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Group resists complying, citing members’ privacy and safety fears

SNAP faces potential “contempt of court” for protecting victims

In unique case, a twice-accused priest alleges 6 person “conspiracy”

But support group says “We just can’t disclose crime victims’ names”

SNAP: “To do so would violate victims’, witnesses’ and others’ privacy rights”

WHAT

Holding signs and childhood photos at a sidewalk news conference, clergy sex abuse victims and their supporters will disclose that

--a St. Louis judge has ordered SNAP to turn over abuse victims’ names to a twice-accused predator priest,

--never in its nearly 30 year history has the group been hit with such “a broad and troubling court ruling,”

--it has already turned over “hundreds of pages” of emails (with many names redacted), but

--it fears if it does not comply it will soon be found “in contempt” and sanctioned by the

MO Victims hit with "unprecedented" court order - Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests judge for not disclosing information containing victims' names

The organization will also prod Archbishop Robert Carlson to stop the priest from using "these intimidating, hardball legal maneuvers."

And SNAP is begging anyone who may have seen, suspected or suffered crimes by the priest to "call police now so that kids can be protected."

WHEN

Thursday, July 21 at 1:30 p.m.

WHERE

On the sidewalk outside the Catholic Cathedral 4431 Lindell (near Taylor) in St. Louis' Central West End

WHO

A small group of abuse victims who belong to a support group called SNAP, the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAPnetwork.org)

WHY

In a ruling that SNAP calls "unprecedented" in its history, this week, a federal judge in St. Louis ordered that SNAP must give a twice-accused predator priest information containing names of dozens of victims, witnesses and whistleblowers. Never before, SNAP says, has a court issued such a "troubling order" against it, which it contends violates the group leaders' consciences, duties and the substantive requirements of Missouri law that it maintain such information confidential, only to be disclosed if the victims consent in writing, which has not occurred. Snap fears rulings such as this will deter other crime victims from reporting criminals and place victims, their families and witnesses in potential peril.

A year ago, an archdiocesan priest filed a lawsuit alleging defamation and a "a conspiracy" by SNAP, prosecutors, two police officers and the parents of a boy, to deprive the priest of his civil rights by making false reports of child sex crimes and to seek financial damages from a jury against SNAP and the others.

http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/federal-lawsuit-filed-by-st-louis-priest-cleared-of-child/article_b13a09e4-e683-56ad-a5b6-0ff5bacbd667.html

The priest, Fr. Xiu Hui "Joseph" Jiang, has been criminally charged in two eastern Missouri counties with molesting a boy and a girl. He is, to SNAP's knowledge, the only alleged child-molesting cleric to ever file such "patently ridiculous" claims, SNAP says, and it appears he is the first Missouri priest to sue the mother and father of an alleged child sex abuse victim. (Case Number: 4:15-cv-01008-CEJ). Fr. Jiang is believed to be close to Archbishop Robert Carlson.

In its filings, SNAP contends that the alleged “conspiracy” is impossible because SNAP leaders had no contact with victims, their parents or law enforcement until AFTER Fr. Jiang was arrested. In both cases, SNAP learned of the arrest through the news media. SNAP contends that Archbishop Carlson is the driving force behind Fr. Jiang’s suit and/or could stop it. SNAP also charges that Fr. Jiang’s legal move is a “SLAPP,” a Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation, designed to scare and discourage victims, witnesses and whistleblowers into staying silent.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategic_lawsuit_against_public_participation

“This is a serious threat to other groups that serve victims of domestic and sexual violence and other crimes,” said David Clohessy of SNAP. “We’re convinced Catholic officials are desperately trying to de-fund, discredit, distract us while scaring police, prosecutors, parents, victims, witnesses and whistleblowers into keeping quiet and not reach out for help.”

“We feel that Fr. Jiang and Archbishop Carlson are desperately trying to protect their reputations and careers by scaring victims, witnesses and whistleblowers into staying silent,” said Barbara Dorris of SNAP. “They’re being bullies and trying hard to protect their reputations and careers, instead of protecting boys, girls and abuse victims.”

Despite an official national church policy mandating “openness” in pedophile priest cases, Archbishop Carlson refuses to reveal where Fr. Jiang is living, why he had a bedroom in Carlson’s home and why Fr. Jiang followed Carlson from city to city (a highly unusual arrangement in the Catholic Church). Carlson also refuses to address an allegation that Fr. Jiang admitted to a Lincoln County girl’s parents that he’d molested their daughter and that Carlson tried to get the parents to return a \$20,000 check that the priest reportedly gave them after he admitted his crimes. SNAP wants Carlson to honor his pledges to be “transparent” and publicly disclose this information.

And SNAP wants Carlson to order Fr. Jiang to “drop this intimidating hurtful, legal maneuver.”

In June 2012, Fr. Jiang was arrested and charged with repeatedly molesting the Lincoln County girl. He was charged with alleged child sex crimes and “victim tampering.” In November 2013, those charges were dismissed. According to a pending civil suit brought by the girl, Carlson was “supervising Fr. Jiang very closely,” “knew that (he) was a danger to children” and abused the girl while “living in the archbishop’s home.”

In April 2014, Fr. Jiang was arrested on charges of repeatedly molesting a St. Louis city boy between 2011-2012 at the Cathedral Catholic school in the Central West End. Those charges were dropped in June 2015. Prosecutors said, however, that they hope to re-file the case. The boy’s parents have not filed a civil suit. Nevertheless, Fr. Jiang is suing them (along with SNAP, two police officers and City).

http://www.bishop-accountability.org/news2015/05_06/2015_06_17_Salter_ChildAbuse.htm

In 2012, in a similar but “less intrusive and frightening move,” a Kansas City judge ordered SNAP to turn over records to an accused priest (Fr. Michael Tierney) but let the group redact victims’ names, citing a Missouri statute that protects staff and clients of rape crisis centers. In that case, editorials in the New York Times, The Washington Post, the National Catholic Reporter and the Post-Dispatch backed SNAP’s position.

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/14/opinion/hurting-advocates-of-victims-abused-by-priests.html?_r=1&ref=opinion

<http://www.kansascity.com/news/politics-government/>

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-passivity-of-the-catholic-church/2012/05/06/gIQAJgAU6T_story.html

https://www.ncronline.org/news/accountability/snap-subpoenas-harm-key-ally-victims?_ga=1.6417787.859034702.1458828391

http://www.stltoday.com/news/opinion/columns/the-platform/editorial-missouri-high-court-oks-harassment-of-priest-victims-group/article_2a3f1441-b6d0-57f8-821d-90669ec8b82a.html

The pending case, brought in federal court, is overseen by Judge Carol Jackson. She has set a March 2017 trial date.

Fr. Jiang is represented by John Sauer (jsauer@clarksauer.com, clangeneckert@clarksauer.com, ksuermann@clarksauer.com). SNAP is represented, pro bono, by Amy Lorenz-Moser (312 4980, amy@carpentermoser.com) and Dan Carpenter (dan@carpentermoser.com).

Justin Assouad (241 6160, JLA@heplerbroom.com) and Gerard Noce (241 6160, GTN@heplerbroom.com) represents Archbishop Carlson. Fr. Jiang’s criminal attorney is Paul D’Agrosa (725 8443, paul@wolffdagrosa.com). One of Jiang’s alleged victims (the Lincoln County girl) is represented by Ken Chackes (369 3902 cell, kchackes@cch-law.com) and Nicole Gorovsky (872 8420, ngorovsky@cch-law.com).

Copies of the judge’s order will be available at the news conference.

Contact:

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COMMENTS

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John Duffin commented

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The victims rights to privacy must be protected. This will set precedent and will keep other future whistleblowers and victims from coming forward. Lives are at stake here. Many lives have already been lost. We do not need anymore. Protect the victims privacy rights.

Sincerely, John Duffin.

@SNAPNetwork

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[http://www.snapnetwork.org/mo_victims_hit_with_unprecedented_court_order?](http://www.snapnetwork.org/mo_victims_hit_with_unprecedented_court_order?recruiter_id=22012)

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